

Delaware Wetlands Conference set for Feb. 3-4

Focus on advancing wetland science and conservation in the Mid-Atlantic region; Registration closes Jan. 27

DOVER – DNREC is pleased to host the 2016 Delaware Wetland Conference which focuses on advancing wetland science and conservation through its theme “Educate, Connect, Protect.” The wetlands conference – one of the largest gatherings of wetlands professionals on the Atlantic Coast – takes place Feb. 3 and 4 at the Chase Center on the Riverfront in Wilmington, with an agenda this year expanded to two full days of presenting and sharing wetlands expertise.

“Wetlands play an important role in Delaware’s environment by improving water quality, providing habitat for fish and wildlife, and protecting our communities from flooding,” said DNREC Secretary Small, who will kick-off the conference by welcoming attendees from throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region. “DNREC recognizes the Delaware Wetlands Conference as an extraordinary forum for wetlands professionals to connect and share their knowledge, ideas, and innovative projects that will not only improve our practices and policies but will continue to advance wetland conservation.”

The conference brings together nearly 300 wetlands professionals, students and environmental policy makers. They will take advantage of 43 diverse presentations, along with interactive workshops, abundant networking opportunities and an exhibition hall with nearly two dozen displays showcasing programs and products available to attendees.

DNREC’s Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program and the Coastal Training Program organized the conference that also features two keynote speakers who will highlight wetland

research as it relates to global and local issues. On Feb. 3 Elizabeth Schuster, one of the first environmental economists hired by The Nature Conservancy, will discuss her work on the economic importance of wetland and coastal restoration. On Feb. 4, Dr. William "Bill" Mitsch, an internationally recognized wetland scientist and researcher, will speak on wetland science and where he sees it heading on a global scale.

New to the 2016 conference are two workshops focusing on communicating science. On Feb. 3, the first workshop, "Communicating Climate Change", will be presented by Melanie Reding and Sarah Nuss of the Jacques Cousteau and Chesapeake Bay Virginia National Estuarine Research Reserves. Steve Raabe of OpinionWorks, Amy Jacobs of The Nature Conservancy and Erin McLaughlin of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources will present the second workshop on Feb. 4 – "Reaching Your Audience: Accelerating Wetlands Restoration in the Chesapeake and Beyond." This workshop introduces social marketing and uses local survey results to demonstrate how social marketing can be used to increase interest and participation in wetland restoration projects.

If you are interested in attending the 2016 Delaware Wetlands Conference, and have not yet signed up, online registration and the conference agenda are available at <http://de.gov/dewetlandsconference>. Interested parties may register for one or both days. Registration closes Jan. 27.

For more information on DNREC's programs that restore and protect Delaware's wetlands, visit the Wetland Monitoring & Assessment Program's website at: <http://de.gov/delawarewetlands> or contact [Brittany Haywood](#), outreach and communications specialist at 302-739-9939.

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